FEBRUARY 1982

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Decorative Products WORLD

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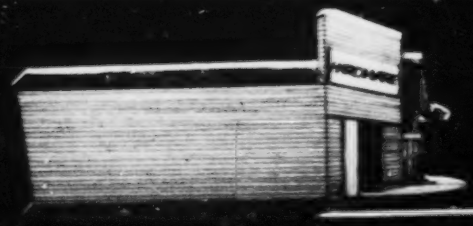
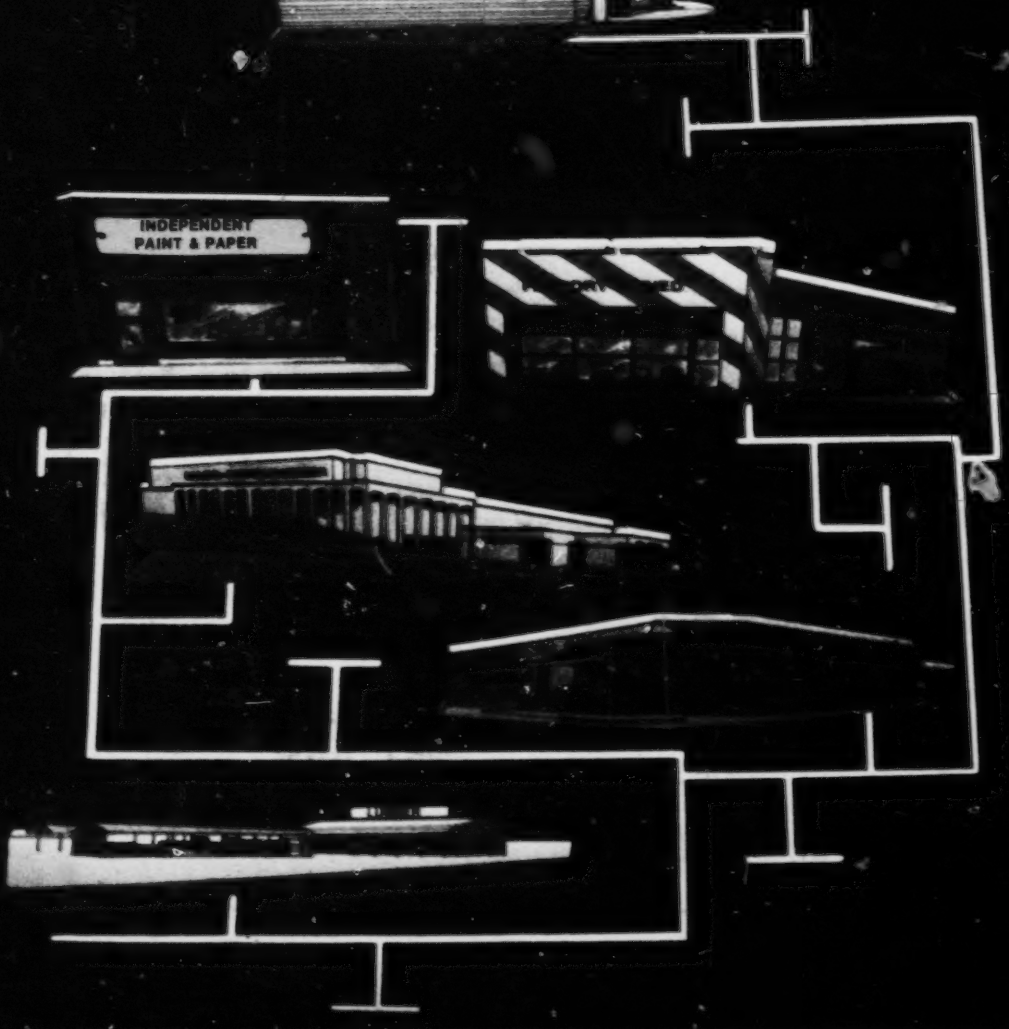


Retailers Hope For A Rebound



ANNUAL READER SURVEY REPORT

Decorative Products WORLD

FEBRUARY, 1982 (ISSN 0199-4328) VOL. 74 NO. 6

Annual Readers Survey: Making Sense Of The Market *by John L. Cleveland* 14

Independents: Little "Real" Growth In '81 16

Manufacturer Stores: I/C/I Resurgence Helps 18

Hardware Stores: High Impact In Paint & Sundries 26

Lumber/Building Supply Stores: Concentrated Effort Pays Off In A High Sales/Space Efficiency 27

Home Centers: Recessionary 1980s Hurt Them Too 28

Mass Merchandisers: High Reliance On DIY Paint Sales, But Negligible Wallcoverings Volume 29

Floorcoverings Stores: Impact In Wallcoverings and Window Treatments 33

Interior Design Studios: High-Volume In Big-Ticket Items 33

Others: A Mixed Bag, But Hard To Ignore 33

Summary 35

Product Variations 36

Product Variations: Equipment Rentals: Profits In Floor Care Products 39

Sign Painter Brushes: Big-Ticket Items That Require A Small Stock *by Abel Banov* 42

Making It As A Maintenance Coatings Retailer, Part II *by John L. Cleveland* 44

COLUMNS

Editorial 6

Washington 8

Market Trends *by Abel Banov* 47

Designer's Showcase *by Lucretia Arpad A.S.I.D.* 57

DEPARTMENTS

Events 53

Industry 54

People 56

Buyers' Alert 60

Classified 65

End Paper 66

Answers 69

EDITORIAL

Annual Reader Survey

"The basic thesis of gestalt theory might be formulated thus: There are contexts in which what is happening in the world cannot be deduced from the characteristics of the separate pieces, but conversely: what happens to a part of the whole is, in clear-cut cases, determined by the laws of the inner structure of its whole . . ."—**Max Wertheimer, founder of gestalt theory. "Gestalt" is a German word usually translated as meaning "shape" or "form."**

The influence of gestalt theory on the behavioral sciences to which initially it was most strongly applied has waned somewhat, but the philosophic underpinnings of the theory are strong and provide an excellent context in which to view the world and interpret phenomena. *DPW*'s Annual Reader Survey might be said to be the only published attempt to apply gestalt theory to a scientific study of the decorative products market. It is the only source of statistical information on the whole market as well as its many components. Instead of examining only the wallcoverings market or paint market or only the independent paint and wallpaper stores or home center stores, the report—published each year at this time—attempts to pinpoint those qualities that make each market component different as well as indicate how those components interact with one another. When consumers buy paint rather than wallcoverings or choose one type of store over another, there is a reason. The *DPW* Annual Survey Report does not provide all of the answers, but it does give some clues and with a little study and careful interpretation can help retailers determine their true market strengths as well as the weaknesses of competitors.

Preparation of this year's report began almost as soon as work on last year's well-received report was completed. *DPW* solicited ideas from retailers and suppliers on how the report might be improved. Almost everyone had some new subject they wanted to see covered, and it became a real chore to condense the ideas submitted into a form that would fit into a four-page questionnaire. Even with our best efforts to edit the questionnaire down into a manageable form and make filling out the questionnaire less of a chore, we have to admit that the survey form ended up being, as one respondent scribbled in the margins, "too damned long." We apologize for the length of the questionnaire and thank all of those retailers who took the time to complete it anyway. Maybe we tried to accomplish too much, but we felt that the more information we provided, the better it would be for all concerned. The length of the questionnaire was probably one reason why our total number of responses was down somewhat this year. The other reason was that the cutoff date had to be moved up this year in order for us to complete tabulation within the established time limit.

Actually, there's probably no reason why the questionnaire has to be quite so detailed every year. Some aspects of the market could probably be studied on an every-other-year or every three-year basis because they don't change very much on a year-to-year basis. Our goal next year is to simplify the form so that today's busy retailers can complete it within a reasonable length of time.

Again, our apologies to those who found the questionnaire too long and our thanks to all of those who helped in its preparation, completion and tabulation. We think that once you examine the survey data in this issue you'll conclude that a gestalt view of the market is the best perspective and that the effort expended was worthwhile—J.L.C.

Decorative Products World

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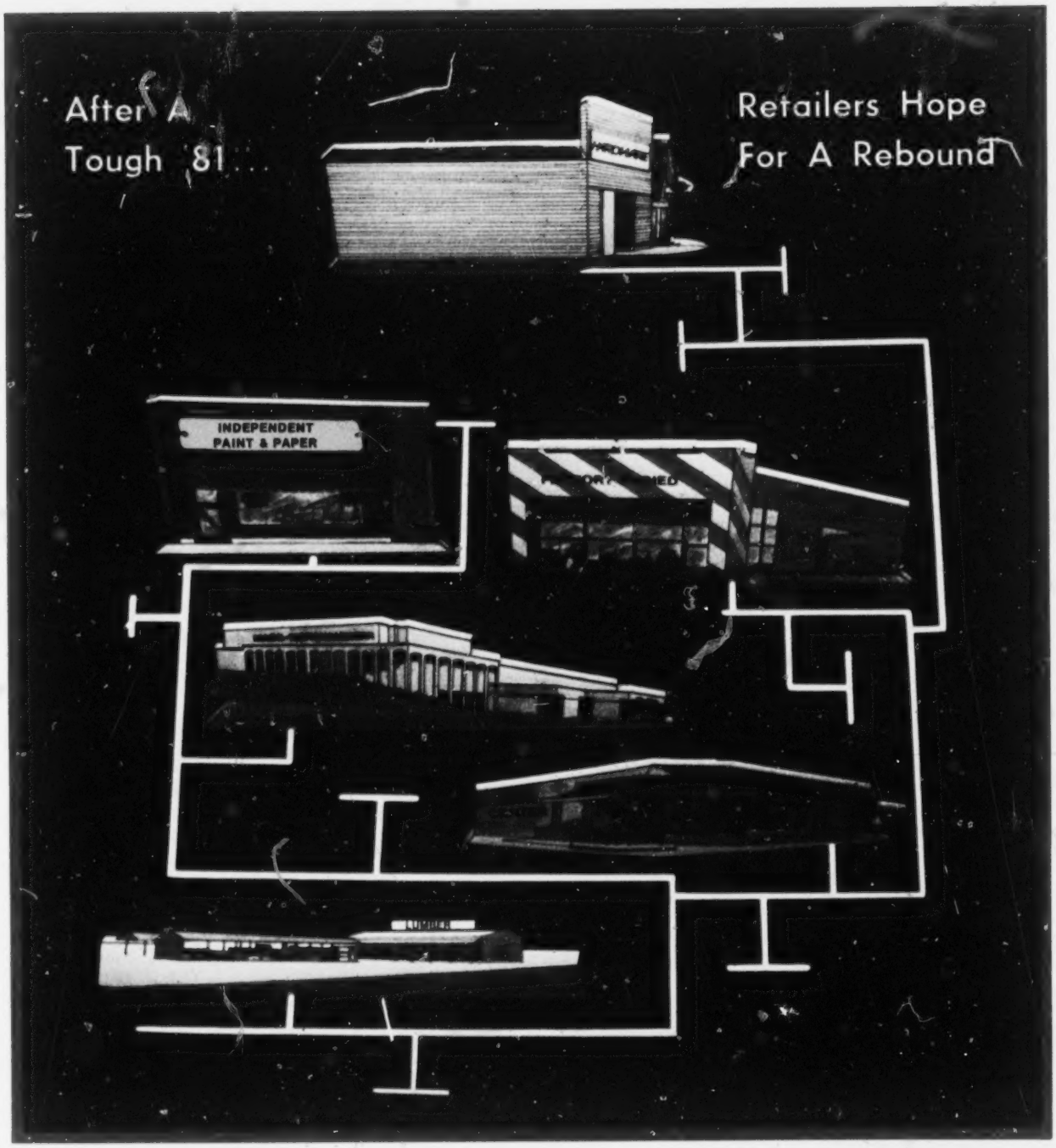


MAKING SENSE OF THE MARKET

ANNUAL READER SURVEY REPORT

By John L. Cleveland
Editorial Director

Two consecutive tough years in the decorative products market has left many retailers a little shellshocked but has not rocked their faith that sooner or later—maybe even this year—conditions are bound to improve.

Evidence of retailer's problems and faith in the future as well as ongoing adjustments to changing conditions in the market was apparent in *Decorative Products World's* Annual Reader Survey conducted in late 1981. The results of the *DPW* Reader Survey are published each February and are used as reference source by many decorative products retailers and suppliers. The *DPW* Reader Survey is the only statistical source of information on the whole decorative products market. It covers almost every imaginable type of decorative product and type of retailer selling them.

The 1981-82 Reader Survey Report is the most ambitious ever attempted. It provides information on subjects not covered in past surveys—equipment rental, analysis of departments with the highest gross margins and average store or department size, for example—and includes two categories of decorative products outlets not reported on separately in past surveys—interior design studios and floorcoverings stores.

In addition, the report provides data on six other major outlet categories included in last year's report: independent paint and wallpaper stores, paint-manufacturer-owned stores, hardware stores, lumber and building supply stores, home centers and mass merchandisers. The survey data is based upon 556 responses from 6,000 randomly selected retailers surveyed by mail in November of last year. Responses received by the December 1 cutoff date were coded and then tabulated by computer so that the results were available by the third week in December. Among the findings of the survey:

● A slim majority of the respondents (50.1 percent) indicated that they had experienced a real (adjusted for inflation) increase in total decorative product gross sales last year of an average 9.7 percent; 30.3 percent of respondents indicated that decorative products gross sales (adjusted for inflation) had remained about the same in 1981 as in 1980, and 19.6 percent indicated that gross sales had—in real terms—declined last year.

● For the vast majority of respondents, 1981 was an average or above average year. Respondents were asked to rate sales in 1981 according to whether they thought that conditions were "booming," "above average," "average," "below average" or "poor." Nearly 70 percent said that 1981 was an "average" year for sales, 14 percent said "above average" and a little more than three percent said that sales were "booming." Less than one percent would go so far as to rate conditions as "poor," but slightly over 12 percent said that sales were "below average."

The results of this aspect of the survey indicated that if for most decorative products retailers, 1981 was nothing spectacular, it was not the disaster retailers in many other markets experienced. Again, the decorative products market's resistance to recession proved to be an underlying strength.

Subject Index:

Independents ..... page 16
Manufacturer Stores ..... page 18
Hardware Stores ..... page 26
Lumber/Building ..... page 27
Home Centers ..... page 28
Mass Merchandisers ..... page 29
Floorcoverings Stores ..... page 33
Interior Design Studios ... page 33
Others ..... page 33
Product Variations ..... page 36

● The survey data also provided plenty of evidence of continued turbulence in the decorative products market last year, however. High levels of discounting on paint and wallcoverings were reported by virtually all major outlet categories. Significant shifts in the percentages of gross sales by product type and by customer type versus the 1980-81 survey may indicate the extent to which retailers had to adjust to changing market conditions. When asked to name who their toughest competitors in their local markets are, retailers—particularly the independents—with comparatively high frequency and vehemence named their own suppliers.

● Respondents in all major outlet categories indicated relatively high levels of optimism about prospects for 1982. Sixty-eight (68) percent of the independents and slightly over 60 percent of the paint-manufacturer-owned respondents, for example, indicated that they expected to see an adjusted-for-inflation increase in gross sales this year. For the independents, the average gross sales increase anticipated was 7.1 percent; for the paint-manufacturer stores, the average growth rate anticipated was 7.4 percent.

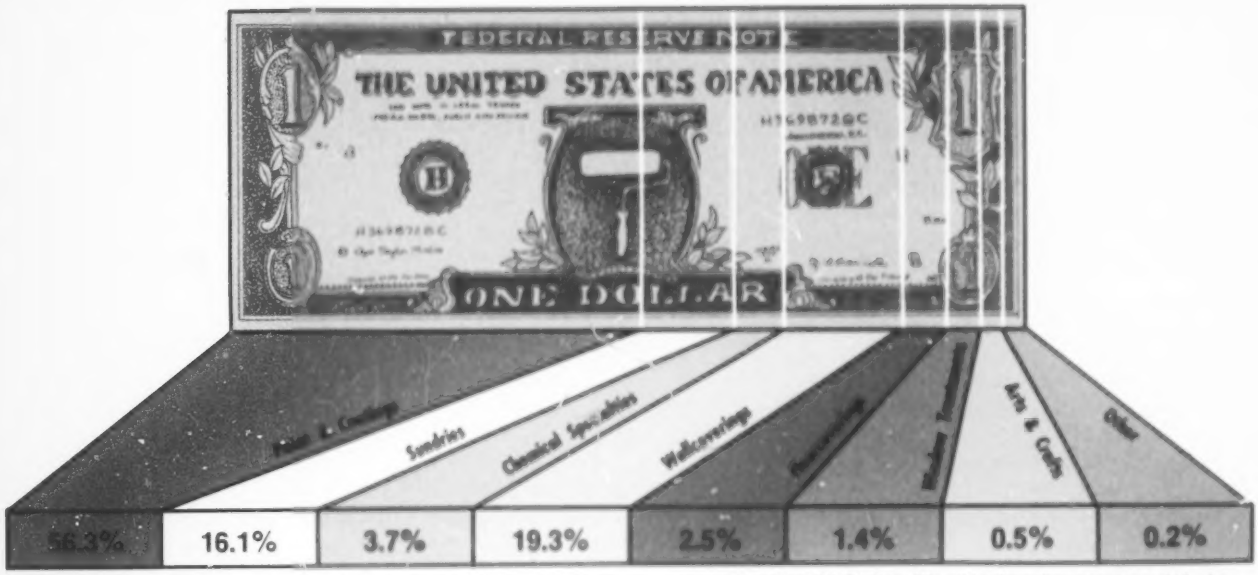
● Respondents were not anticipating much, if any, improvement in the rate of increase of costs of goods sold this year. Independents, for example, projected an average 11.4 percent cost-of-goods-sold increase; hardware store respondents projected an 11.8 percent increase for decorative products. Most of the other major outlet categories projected increases in the same range with the exception of mass merchandisers who indicated their decorative products cost-of-goods sold would grow by an average of only about 8.8 percent.

● Respondents, for the most part, were anticipating increases in decorative products average inventory levels (in dollars) well below anticipated increases in cost of goods sold this year. Hardware store respondents were anticipating only an 8.7 per cent rise in total decorative products inventory, for example. Home center store respondents were anticipating an average increase in decorative products inventory levels of about 10.1 percent but still below the average 11.5 percent increase in cost of goods sold they were anticipating. In other responses on the four-page questionnaire, retailers indicated that they were actively seeking out new, more profitable products they could add this year; however, the responses in regard to changes in inventory levels made it clear that most retailers are inclined to keep inventory levels lean again this year.

● In terms of sales/space efficiency (1981 average total gross sales volume per store divided by average square feet per store for display of decorative products), paint-manufacturer-owned stores ($317 per square foot) led most other outlet categories by a substantial margin.

For the purposes of the survey, decorative products were defined as "paints, coatings, wallcoverings, floorcoverings, window treatments, chemical specialties, arts and craft materials and any product used to install or apply these products." The decorative product non-specialty stores (hardware stores, lumber/-building, home centers and mass merchandisers) were asked to provide data only for their decorative products departments.

In the pages that follow, *DPW* breaks down the survey results into finer detail. A thorough analysis of the survey results should help retailers and suppliers gain a more complete understanding of the decorative products market and make sense of some of the wildly conflicting trends that have been evident in recent months. ■



The illustration above shows the average dollar volume by type of product for independent paint and wallcoverings stores. The illustration below divides average dollar volume by type of customer. DIY stands for "do-it-yourselfers"; I/C/I for "institutional, commercial, industrial accounts." See page 23 for complete store profile.

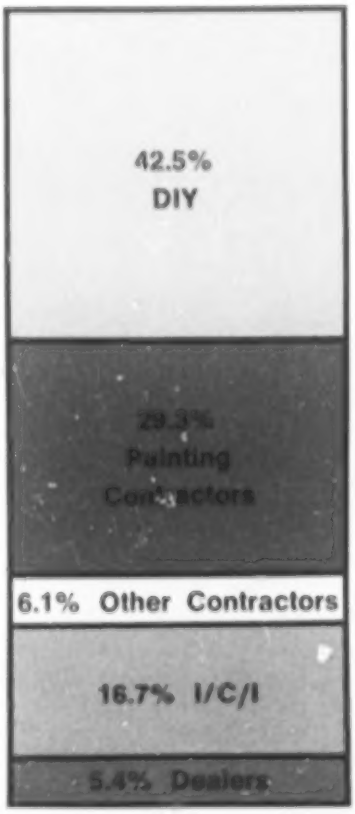
Independents: Little 'Real' Sales Growth In '81

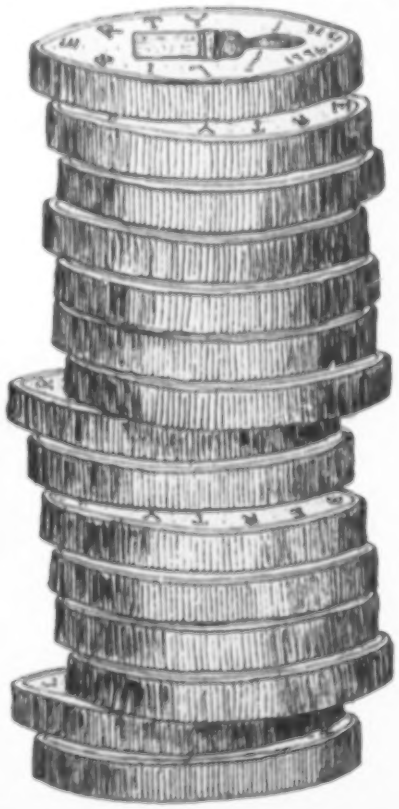
Last month in these pages, Tony Stephanie, new president of the National Decorating Products Association (NDPA), was quoted as saying that adjusted-for-inflation gross sales for his two-store Chicago paint and wallpaper chain in 1981 were virtually the same as in 1980.

The results of *DPW*'s Annual Reader Survey indicated that a good many other independents like Stephanie experienced similar sales results last year. About 42 percent of the 228 independent paint and wallpaper respondents in the 1981-82 survey indicated that their stores had experienced no "real" sales growth last year. That may account for why the average gross sales per store figure ($317,000) in this year's survey was slightly below the 1980 figure ($336,000). One would, of course, expect to see some sales growth based on inflation alone, so the lower gross sales average may partially reflect that the stores in this year's survey had a somewhat smaller volume than those in the 1980-81 survey. Whatever the cause, the percentage of independents reporting no sales improvement or decline was substantially higher than for the survey population as a whole. On the positive side, the percentage of independents reporting a sales decline (17.7 percent) was slightly less than for the survey population as a whole. For the 40.3 percent of respondents who indicated a real gross sales increase, the average rate of increase (10.1 percent) was slightly higher than for the survey population as a whole.

About 72 percent of the independents called 1981 an "average" sales year. A little over 12 percent said that sales were "above average" and 2.9 percent indicated that sales were "booming" last year. Only about 13 percent indicated that 1981 sales were either "below average" or "poor."

For 1982, 68 percent of the in-





dependents said that sales would grow by 7.1 percent. About 23 percent of respondents indicated that real gross sales would remain unchanged and less than 10 percent anticipated a decline. Independents indicated that the average per store total dollar inventory they carried would grow by about 7.3 percent to $76,200 this year. Cost of goods sold, however, will increase by about 11.4 percent, the independents indicated. The percentage of anticipated increase in cost of goods was highest among stores in the Midwest (13.8 percent) and lowest among stores in the South (9.2 percent).

There were some interesting shifts in the percentage of business (dollar volume) by customer type and product type in this year's survey versus last year's. Do-it-yourselfers still comprise the largest share of business for most independents in the 1981-82 survey results, but the average percentage of diy business reported by independents (42.5 percent) was considerably lower than last year's 54.5 percent. The average percentage of painting contractor business was virtually unchanged from last year, but there was an increase in the percentages reported for

institutional/commercial / industrial customers. There was also a noticeable drop in the percentage of average wallcoverings business and a concomitant gain in the average percentage of paints and coatings business versus last year. These shifts may be only statistical aberations, but they could reflect the degree of adjustments independents are having to make to today's tough competitive environment.

Certainly there was plenty of evidence of market turbulence in the responses of the independents. While the discount prices for paint and wallcovering charged by independents tended to be higher than those charged by the other major outlet categories surveyed, the percentages of materials independents sold at a discount also tended to be higher. (We should note that about 15 per cent of the independents said they did no discounting at all.) For those doing some discounting, respondents said that they discounted an average of about 66 percent of their latex, flat interior paint gallonage and 62 percent of the wallcoverings rollage sold. The relatively high rates of discounting reported by independents may reflect the cutthroat nature of competition in the decorative products market and the extent to which independents are having to adjust to competition from mass merchandisers and discounters.

Mass merchandisers and "discounters" topped the majority of independents' "toughest competition" lists again this year, but there was also a new element in this year's survey results. With greater frequency than in the past—and in some cases, with outright hostility—independents said that suppliers have become their toughest competitors. Independents long have been sensitive to suppliers opening their own decorative products stores and what one respondent called "stealing" large-volume purchases that they feel rightfully belong to them. The 1981-

Continued on page 23

New!

Zinser's all-purpose latex primer-sealer for all interior and exterior surfaces

One coat of Bulls Eye 1-2-3:

1 Primes — Adheres to all interior and exterior surfaces — weathered, chalky siding and trim, Masonite, gloss woodwork, metal gutters and down spouts. Prevents flash rusting.

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Circle 31 on Reader Action Card

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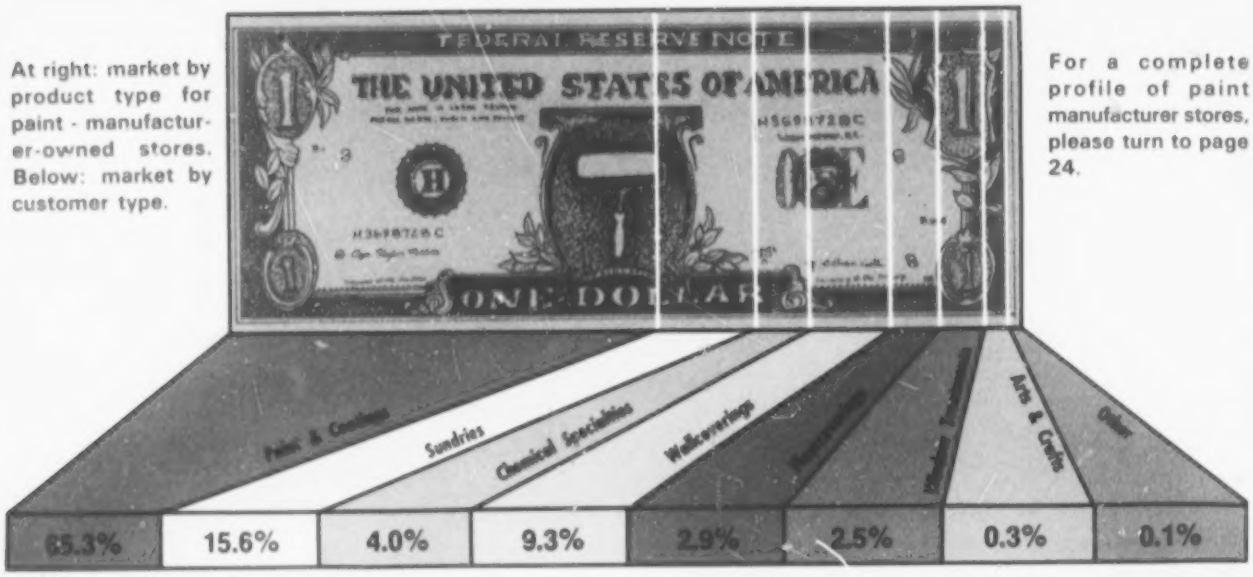
Circle 7 on Reader Action Card

At right: market by product type for paint - manufacturer-owned stores. Below: market by customer type.

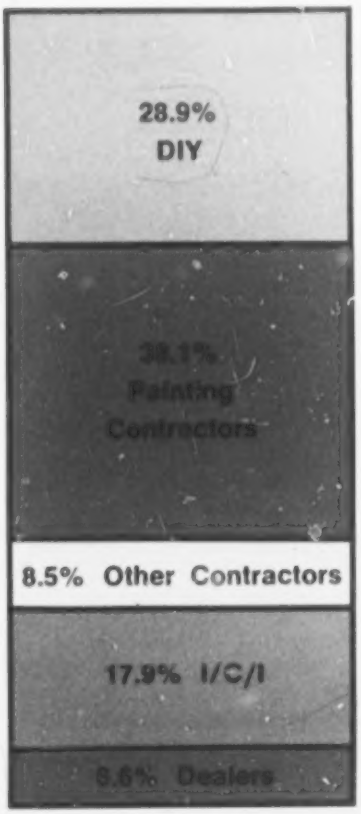


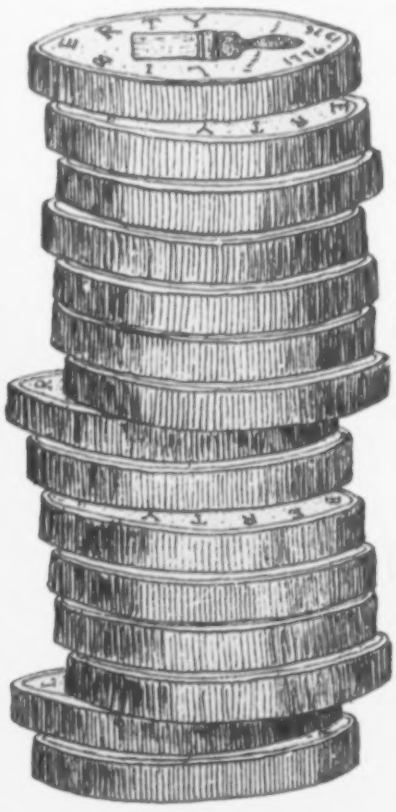
For a complete profile of paint manufacturer stores, please turn to page 24.

Manufacturer Stores: I/C/I Resurgence Helps

Paint - manufacturer - owned stores were affected by some of the same turbulence that made life tough for independents last year, but the painting and decorating contractor market and the institutional / commercial / industrial market on which the manufacturer-owned stores are more dependent showed something of a resurgence last year and that may be one reason why manufacturer-owned store respondents in *DPW's* Annual Reader Survey seemed to fare a little better.

About 50 percent of the manufacturer-owned store respondents in the *DPW* survey said they had experienced a real, gross sales increase last year of an average 15.1 percent. By far, respondents in the West and South seemed to have done better than manufacturer stores in other parts of the country. Compared to the survey population as a whole, a high percentage of the manufacturer-owned stores rated 1981 a "booming" (8.3 percent) or "above average" (22.4 percent) year for sales. Fifty-one (51) percent rated 1981 an "average" year and 18.3 said 1981 was "below average." None indicated that 1981 was a "poor" year for sales.





The manufacturer-owned-store respondents were slighly less optimistic than the independents, however, about prospects for 1982. About 60 percent expected to see an average sales increase of about 7.4 percent; 10.6 percent anticipated a sales decline this year.

The average cost-of-goods-sold increase anticipated by the manufacturer stores, at 10.1 percent, was 1.3 percent less than that of the independents. The $82,263 average total inventory the manufacturer stores said they'd be carrying in 1982 was about eight percent higher than what the independents were anticipating, but the actual spread may be greater since some of the inventory of the manufacturer stores may be carried at factory cost. The manufacturer stores were anticipating only a 5.1 percent increase in average total inventory dollars this year (compared to 7.3 percent for independents).

The average display area for decorative products in the manufacturer

Continued on page 24

Circle 14 on Reader Action Card

Profile: Independents

General Information

Estimated 1981 Average Gross Sales Per Store: **$317,000**
Respondents Belonging to a Chain: **14%**
Average Number of Stores in Chain: **3.4**
Average Display Area Per Store: **1,700 square feet**
Dollar Volume (1981 Gross Sales) Per Square Foot: **$182**
Growth in 1982 (Total) Inventory Dollars Anticipated: **7.3%**
Three Best Sales Months of 1981: **July, June, August**
Three Worst Sales Months of 1981: **January, February, December**
Three Best Sales Days of the Week (on Average) During 1981: **Monday, Saturday, Friday**
Three Worst Sales Days of the Week (on Average) During 1981: **Wednesday, Thursday, Tuesday**
Average Number of Years in Business: **13.6**
Average Number of Employees Per Store: **4.1**
Respondents with an On-Staff Decorator: **15%**

Ranking of Departments by Average Gross Margin (above Cost):

Window Treatments: **43.5%**
Paints and Coatings: **40.1%**
Sundries: **37.4%**
Wallcoverings: **36.1%**
Chemical Specialties: **33.5%**
Floorcoverings: **29.9%**
Arts & Crafts: **21.5%**

Paint Department Data:

Selling: **100%**
Average Number of Full Lines Carried: **3**
Average Number of Annual Turns on Inventory: **5.5**
Average NONDISCOUNT Price Per Gallon—Interior, Flat Latex: **$11.94**
Average DISCOUNT Price Per Gallon—Interior, Flat Latex: **$9.09**
Percent Saying They Did No Discounting: **14.9%**
Percent of Gallonage Sold at a Discount (Average for Those Who Did Some Discounting): **66%**

Wallcoverings Department Data:

Selling: **84%**
Of Those Selling, Doing So from Sample Books Only: **56%**
From Stock Only: **3%**
From Both Sample Books and Stock: **41%**
Average Number of Sample Books Carried: **207**
Average Number of Patterns Stocked: **149**
Average Nondiscount Price Per Single Roll: **$11.82**
Average Discount Price Per Single Roll: **$9.19**
Wallcoverings (in Units) Sold at a Discount (Average For Those Which Do Some Discounting): **62%**
Average Number of Wallcoverings Rolls Purchased: **7.8**

Floorcoverings Department Data:

Selling: **30%**
Of Those Selling, Doing So from Stock: **36%**
Those Selling Offering an Installation Service: **89%**
Average Floorcoverings Purchase: **$682**

Window Treatments Department Data:

Selling: **19%**
Average Number of Years Selling: **3.9**
Average Window Treatments Purchase: **$152**
Of Those Carrying Window Treatments, Percent Selling:
Drapes: **17.3%**
Blinds: **62.8%**
Shades: **64.2%**
Other: **22.9%**

Equipment Rental Data:

Renting: **32%**
Rental Market by Customer Type:
DIY: **33.4%**
Contractors: **57.1%**
Other: **9.5%**

Independents

Continued from page 17

82 survey results may indicate that the resentment is still gaining in intensity.

About 14 percent of the independent respondents had more than one store and the average number of stores in each chain was 3.4. Display areas in the stores of independents ranged from well above 5,000 square feet to well below 1,000 but averaged about 1,700 square feet. Average gross sales per square foot (based on 1981 figures weighted by region) was $182, well above the efficiency of most other types of decorative products outlets except paint-manufacturer-owned stores.

The vast majority of independents carried paints and coatings (100 per cent) and wallcoverings (85 percent). In addition, 30 percent said that they sold floorcoverings, and 19 percent indicated that they sold window treatments. Of those selling floorcoverings, 36 percent said that they stocked and most (89 percent) said that they offered some type of installation service.

The average number of years most of those independents selling window treatments had been doing so compared to the average number of years in business (3.9 versus 13.6) is an indication of how recently many independents have gotten into the window treatments business. Window treatments, it should be noted, were among the products independents said they were most likely to add this year and provided the highest average gross margin (above cost) of any other department. Arts and crafts materials (the product category independents said they were most likely to drop) provided the lowest average margin of any department (21.5 percent).

The number of independents selling wallcoverings from both stock and sample books (41 percent) or from stock alone (three percent) seemed to increase slightly in this year's survey. The average number of sample books carried (207) declined in this year's survey, however.

Independents were in general very optimistic about paint sales increases in 1982. More than 73 percent of respondents said that they anticipated an average increase in paint sales (in gallons) of about 12 percent this year. Nineteen-point-five (19.5) percent of the independents expected no change in paint gallonage and only about seven percent anticipated a decline. ■

Profile: Paint Manufacturer Stores

General Information

Estimated 1981 Average Gross Sales Per Store: **$601,500**
Average Display Area Per Store: **1,900 square feet**
Dollar Volume (1981 Gross Sales) Per Square Foot: **$317**
Growth in 1982 (Total) Inventory Dollars Anticipated: **$5.1%**
Three Best Sales Months of 1981: **June, July, August**
Three Worst Sales Months of 1981: **January, February, December**
Three Best Sales Days of the Week (on Average) During 1981: **Monday, Friday, Saturday**
Three Worst Sales Days of the Week (on Average) During 1981: **Thursday, Wednesday, Tuesday**
Average Number of Years in Business: **13.9**
Average Number of Employees Per Store: **6.7**
Respondents with an On-Staff Decorator: **13.5**

Ranking of Departments by Average Gross Margin:
- Sundries: **43.3%**
- Paints and Coatings: **39.7%**
- Window Treatments: **37.8%**
- Chemical Specialties: **34.1%**
- Wallcoverings: **31.4%**
- Floorcoverings: **26.8%**

Paint Department Data:

- Selling: **100%**
- Average Number of Full Lines Carried: **1.9**
- Average Number of Annual Turns on Inventory: **6.1**
- Average NONDISCOUNT Price Per Gallon—Interior, Flat Latex: **$11.53**
- Average DISCOUNT Price Per Gallon—Interior, Flat Latex: **$8.76**
- Gallonage Sold at a Discount (Average for Those Which Do Some Discounting): **59.6%**

Wallcoverings Department Data:

- Selling: **77.2%**
- Of Those Selling, Doing So from Sample Books Only: **52.8%**
- Selling from Stock Only: **3.2%**
- Selling from Both Sample Books and Stock: **44%**
- Average Number of Sample Books Carried: **229**
- Average Number of Patterns Stocked: **190**
- Average NONDISCOUNT Price Per Single Roll: **$11.55**
- Average DISCOUNT Price Per Single Roll: **$8.63**
- Wallcoverings (in Units) Sold at a Discount (Average For Those Which Do Some Discounting): **66%**

Floorcoverings Department Data:

- Selling: **27%**
- Of Those Selling, Doing So from Stock: **25%**
- Those Selling Offering an Installation Service: **100%**
- Size of Average Floorcoverings Purchase: **$739**

Window Treatments Department Data:

- Selling: **24%**
- Average Number of Years Selling: **4.9**
- Average Window Treatments Purchase: **$167**
- Of Those Carrying Window Treatments, Percent Selling:
- Drapes: **12.5%**
- Blinds: **87.5%**
- Shades: **50.0%**
- Other: **37.5%**

Equipment Rental Data:

- Renting: **34%**
- Rental Market by Customer Type:
- DIY: **28.1%**
- Contractors: **71.0%**
- Other: **0.9%**

Manufacturer Stores

Continued from page 18

stores was about 12 percent greater than for independents (1,900 square-feet per store versus 1,700 for independents), but the nearly 90 percent higher gross sales per store volume for the manufacturer stores ($601,500, slightly less than for manufacturer respondents in last year's survey) gave them a higher sales/-space efficiency ($317 gross sales per square foot on average). The higher per store volume of the paint-manufacturer stores was apparent in last year's survey, and apparently stems from their efforts in the high-volume contractor and institutional/commercial/industrial markets and sales to dealers.

There were some strong similarities between the paint-manufacturer-owned stores and the independents that are apparent in a comparison of the store profiles on the previous pages. Both the manufacturer stores and the independents tended to rate the summer months as their best and the winter months as their worst for sales. There were similiarities, too, in the ranking of the best sales days of the week.

Sundries (with an average gross margin of 43.3 percent) topped the list of departments with the highest margin among manufacturer store respondents, followed by paints and coatings (39.7 percent), window treatments (37.8 percent) and chemical specialties (34.1 percent). Very few of the manufacturer stores carried arts and crafts materials so it was not possible to get an adequate sampling of margins for that department.

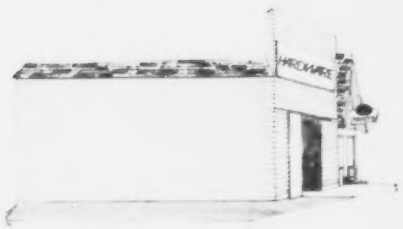
The manufacturer stores carried on average fewer paint lines (1.9) per store and turned their paint inventory over more often annually (6.1 times) than did independents. Prices charged by the manufacturer stores for interior, flat latex paints (both non-discount and discount) were slightly lower than for independents, but the percentage of gallonage sold at discount by those respondents who said they did some discounting was also slightly less.

In general, manufacturer stores were a little more optimistic than independents about prospects for paint sales this year. Nearly 80 percent anticipated a paint sales increase (in gallons) this year of an average 11.4 percent. Less than eight percent expected a paint sales decline.

Compared to independents, a slightly higher percentage of manufacturer stores were involved in equipment rental and (as one would expect) a higher percentage of their rentals were to contractors (71 percent). ■

Hardware Stores:

High Impact In Paint & Sundries



The data for the store profile on hardware stores is based upon responses from 102 store owners and managers whose primary business is hardware, but who (as the $43,750 average gross profits per store figure indicates) also do a fair business in decorative products.

Primarily the hardware store survey respondents operated smaller, family-owned neighborhood hardware stores, but most were a part of large buying groups. As the breakdown of decorative business by type of product shows, the major market impact of the hardware stores is in the area of paints and coatings, sundries and chemical specialties. These stores do very little in the way of wallcoverings business (although 26.2 percent indicated that they do sell wall-

Profile: Hardware Stores

General Information

Decorative Products Volume by Type of Product:
Paints & Coatings: **44.5%**
Sundries: **23.4%**
Chemical Specialties: **21.3%**
Wallcoverings: **3.8%**
Floorcoverings: **1.5%**
Window Treatments: **4.5%**
Arts & Crafts: **0.6%**
Other: **0.%**

Decorative Products Volume by Type of Customer:
DIY: **72.7%**
Painting & Decorating Contractors: **7.1%**
Other Contractors: **7.1%**
Institutional/Commercial/Industrial: **11.8%**
Other Dealers: **1.3%**

Estimated 1981 Average Gross Decorative Products Sales Per Store: **$43,750**
Average Display Area for Decorative Products Per Store: **804 square feet**
Decorative Products Dollar Volume (1981 Gross Sales) per square foot: **$54**
Percentage Growth in 1982 (Total) Decorative Products Inventory Anticipated: 8.7%
Three Best Sales Months for Decorative Products: **June, May, July**
Three Worst Sales Months for Decorative Products: **January, February, December**
Three Best Sales Days of the Week for Decorative Products (on Average) During 1981: **Saturday, Friday, Tuesday**
Three Worst Sales Days of the Week for Decorative Products (on Average) During 1981: **Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday**
Average Number of Employees Per Store: **9.9**
Respondents with an On-Staff Decorator: **0%**
Ranking of Decorative Products Departments by Average Gross Margin:

- Sundries: **45.2%**
- Chemical Specialties: **42.2%**
- Window Treatments: **40.6%**
- Paints and Coatings: **38.8%**
- Wallcoverings: **37.9%**
- Floorcoverings: **23.7%**

Paint Department Data:

- Selling: **100%**
- Average Number of Full Lines Carried: **1.3**
- Average Number of Annual Turns on Inventory: **3.5**
- Average NONDISCOUNT Price PER Gallon—Interior, Flat Latex: **$13.48**
- Average DISCOUNT Price Per Gallon—Interior, Flat Latex: **$9.43**
- Gallons Sold at a Discount (Average for Those Which Do Some Discounting): **46.9%**

Wallcoverings Department Data:

- Selling: **26.2%**
- Of Those Selling, Doing So From Sample Books Only: **85.4%**
- Selling from Stock Only: **4.1%**
- Selling from Both Sample Books and Stock: **10.5%**
- Average Number of Sample Books Carried: **27**
- Average Number of Patterns Stocked: **400**
- Average NONDISCOUNT Price Per Single Roll: **$10.25**
- Average DISCOUNT Price Per Single Roll: **$7.81**
- Wallcoverings (in Units) Sold at a Discount (Average for Those Who Do Some Discounting): **64%**
- Average Number of Wallcoverings Rolls Purchased: **8.8**

Floorcoverings Department Data:

- Selling: **10.3%**
- Of Those Selling, Doing So from Stock: **83.3%**
- Those Selling Offering an Installation Service: **8%**
- Average Floorcoverings Purchase: **$123**

Window Treatments Department Data:

- Selling: **58.6%**
- Average Number of Years Selling: **16.1**
- Average Window Treatments Purchase: **$23.13**
- Of Those Carrying Window Treatments, Percent Selling:
- Drapes: **2.4%**
- Blinds: **41.7%**
- Shades: **75.1%**
- Other: **63.1%**

Equipment Rental Data:

- Renting: **32.4%**
- Rental Market by Customer Type:
- DIY: **86.5%**
- Contractors: **6.4%**
- Other: **7.1%**

coverings) or floorcoverings business (10.3 percent of respondents sell), but quite a few had a fair window treatments business. In fact, these stores had more experience in window treatments sales (16.1 average number of years selling) than any other types of outlets studied. The types of window treatments sold tend to be low-ticket window shades rather than big-ticket items like draperies

Those selling wallcoverings tended to do so from sample books only, and most carried very few sample books (27 per store was the average). The respondents stocking wallcoverings, however, tended to carry a fairly high number of patterns (400).

Although the per store average for total gross decorative products sales was comparatively low for hardware store respondents, these types of stores do have a major impact on the market (primarily do-it-yourselfers) because their numbers are great. In many suburbs and small towns, they often represent the only nearby outlet for decorative products.

The average nondiscount price for interior, flat latex paint charged by the hardware store respondents ($13.48 per gallon) was among the highest of any of the major outlet categories studied, and the gallonage sold at the $9.43 average discount price for such paint was low (46.9 percent).

Sundries and chemical specialties were the departments that hardware store respondents ranked as having the highest gross margins (45.2 percent and 42.2 percent, respectively and the floorcoverings department (with an average gross margin of 23.7 percent) brought up the rear. The hardware store respondents had the lowest sales/space efficiency for decorative products ($54 per square foot) of any other types of stores studied.

Slightly more than 53 percent of the hardware store respondents indicated that they had experienced an average real gross sales increase last year of about 10.3 percent for decorative products. Nineteen-and seven-tenths (19.7) percent said that decorative products gross sales (adjusted for inflation) had declined, and slightly less than 27 percent said that there had been no change. No hardware store respondents rated 1981 a "booming" year for decorative products sales, although 11.3 percent indicated they'd had an "above average" year. The vast majority (75.8 percent) said that 1981 had been only an "average" year for decorative products sales.

The hardware store respondents were among the most pessimistic in regard to decorative products sales prospects for 1982. Only about 53 percent expected to see a real gross sales increase (11 percent average growth) and nearly 11 percent were anticipating a real decline. Hardware store respondents anticipated an average increase in decorative products cost of goods sold of about 11.8 percent. Average total decorative products inventory carried will grow by 8.7 percent from $21,500 last year to $23,375, survey respondents indicated.

Just as with the lumber and building supply stores, home centers and mass merchandisers, hardware stores' best sales days for decorative products tend to be concentrated toward the end of the week. Over 65 percent rated Saturday as the best day for decorative products sales, and 26 percent rated Friday as the best. Tuesday was a distant "best sales day" choice and in fact, also earned the most mentions as being the worst sales day of the week. ■

Lumber/Building Supply Stores:

Concentrated Effort Pays Off In A High Sales/Space Efficiency

Profile On Page 28

In many respects the lumber and building supply stores selling decorative products are the most difficult to characterize.

For example, there's the debate over the real differences between lumber/building stores and home center stores. We tried to avoid that problem by letting respondents check for themselves whether they were operating a lumber/building supply store or a home center store, figuring that they could best decide for themselves what they were. The differences in the two types of stores are apparent in a close study of the store profiles for each type of outlet category, but there were also some strong shifts in the numbers in this year's study versus last year's. The lumber/building supply stores in this year's survey population had a much higher average gross decorative products sales per store figure this year versus last, and as a group, were more dependent on diy trade.

The notable statistic about the lumber/supply stores is their relatively high sales/space efficiency for decorative products ($296 per square foot)—attributable to their high volume and the average 503-square-feet-per-store display area for decorative products (lowest of any *store* category studied). The high sales/space efficiency of the lumber/building supply stores makes sense when one considers that these stores can often concentrate on a few decorative products lines (a paint or stain line sold as an adjunct to lumber purchases, for example) and tend to sell in relatively high per customer volumes.

Nearly 60 percent of the lumber/-building supply respondents indicated that they had an average decorative products adjusted-for-inflation gross sales increase last year of an average 8.9 percent. About 20 percent had a sales decline, however. Over 70 percent rated 1981 an "average" year for decorative products sales and nearly 17 percent rated it a "below average" year.

For 1982, an average 9.4 percent cost of goods increase for decorative products was anticipated and only an average 6.8 percent gain in total decorative products dollar inventory levels. About 62 percent of respondents anticipated an average gross sales increase of about 8.8 percent, and 26 percent expected to see decorative products sales decline. ■

Profile: Lumber/Building Supply

General Information

Decorative Products Volume by Type of Product:
Paints & Coatings **66.3%**
Sundries: **15.1%**
Chemical Specialties: **10.3%**
Wallcoverings: **3.9%**
Floorcoverings: **3.5%**
Window Treatments: **0.9%**
Arts & Crafts: **0**
Other: **0**
Decorative Products Volume by Type of Customer:
DIY: **67.8%**
Painting & Decorating Contractors: **4.8%**
Other Contractors: **11.2%**
Institutional/Commercial/Industrial: **16.2%**

Estimated 1981 Average Gross Decorative Products Sales Per Store: **$149,000**
Average Display Area for Decorative Products Per Store: **503 square feet**
Decorative Products Dollar Volume (1981 Gross Sales) Per Square Foot: **$296**
Growth in 1982 Decorative Products Inventory Anticipated: **6.8%**
Three Best Sales Months for Decorative Products: **June, May, July**
Three Worst Sales Months for Decorative Products: **January, February, December**
Three Best Sales Days of the Week for Decorative Products (on Average) During 1981: **Saturday, Friday, Monday**
Three Worst Sales Days of the Week for Decorative Products (on Average) During 1981: **Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.**
Average Number of Employees Per Store: **4.6**
Respondents with an On-Staff Decorator: **0%**
Ranking of Decorative Products Departments by Average Gross Margin:
Paints & Coatings: **43.5%**
Window Treatments: **37.6%**
Floorcoverings: **35.7%**
Sundries: **32.9%**
Wallcoverings: **31.7%**
Chemical Specialties: **31.3%**

Paint Department Data:

Selling: **100%**
Average Number of Full Lines Carried: **1.7**
Average Number of Annual Turns of Inventory: **4.4**
Average NONDISCOUNT Price Per Gallon—Interior, Flat Latex: **$12.81**
Average DISCOUNT Price Per Gallon—Interior, Flat Latex: **$8.94**
Gallons Sold at a Discount (Average for Those Which Do Some Discounting): **59.3%**

Wallcoverings Department Data:

Selling: **29.8%**
Of Those Selling, Doing So from Sample Books Only: **100%**
Sellings from both Sample Books and Stock: **0%**
Average Number of Sample Books Carried: **148**
Average NONDISCOUNT Price Per Single Roll: **$12.38**
Average DISCOUNT Price Per Single Roll: **$8.13**
Wallcoverings (in Units) Sold at a Discount (Average for Those Which Do Some Discounting): **63.6%**
Average Number of Wallcoverings Rolls Purchased: **4.4**

Floorcoverings Department Data:

Selling: **61.5%**
Of Those Selling, Doing So from Stock: **50%**
Those Selling Offering an Installation Service: **39.8%**
Average Floorcoverings Purchase: **$265**

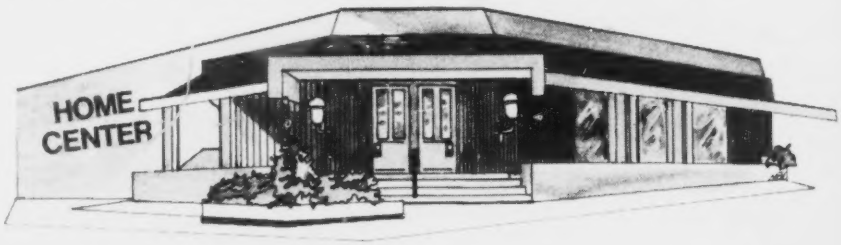
Window Treatments Department Data:

Selling: **35.1%**
Average Number of Years Selling: **8.4**
Average Window Treatments Purchase: **$37.38**
Of Those Selling Window Treatments, Percent Selling:
Drapes: **0%**
Blinds: **52%**
Shades: **58.8%**
Other: **60%**

Equipment Rental Data:

Percent Renting: **51.1%**
Rental Market by Customer Type:
DIY: **81%**
Contractors: **19%**
Other: **0%**

Home Centers: Recessionary 1980s Hurt Them Too



Home centers have been viewed as being among the fastest-growing retailers of the 1970s, but there was evidence in the *DPW* Annual Reader Survey that the so far recession-prone 1980s has not left some of them completely unaffected.

True, 82.8 percent of the home center respondents said that they had experienced an average adjusted-for-inflation increase in decorative products sales of 9.4 percent in 1981, but nearly 20 percent indicated that sales had declined. None of the home center resopndents rated 1981 either a "booming" or "poor" year for decorative products sales, but about 24 percent indicated that sales had been "above average"; 62 percent said "average" and nearly 14 percent said it was a "below average year." For 1982, nearly 60 percent of the home center respondents were anticipating an average "real" deco-

rative products sales increase of about 9.6 percent.

The profile for home centers points up some of the parallels between home centers and lumber/-building stores, but the differences are apparent too. The home center respondents, as a group, indicated less reliance on paints and coatings than did lumber/building stores and more product diversification. The average display area for decorative products was also on average much larger. Whereas the lumber/building respondents ranked paints and coatings as being their highest margin decorative products department, home centers, in general, ranked paints and coatings dead last and picked floorcoverings as their high gross margin department. ■

Mass Merchandisers:

High Reliance On DIY Paint Sales, But Negligible Wallcoverings Volume

While the number of mass merchandiser respondents in *DPW's* Annual Reader Survey was small (10), the profile for the mass merchandisers presents, in our opinion, a fairly accurate representation of what might be called a "typical" mass merchandising operation.

Certainly, the extremely high reliance on diy trade showed up in last year's survey, too, as did the strong emphasis on paints and coatings and paint sundries. For the mass merchandisers, wallcoverings represent, in general, a negligible part of the total decorative products volume. Indeed, in a ranking of departments by average gross margin, wallcoverings were dead last. Win-

Profile: Home Centers

General Information:

Decorative Products Volume by Type of Product:
Paints & Coatings: **45.2%**
Sundries: **15.2%**
Chemical Specialties: **12.1%**
Wallcoverings: **10.1%**
Floorcoverings: **6.3%**
Window Treatments: **5.7%**
Arts & Crafts: **2.1%**
Other: **3.3%**

Decorative Products Volume by Type of Customer:
DIY: **67.8%**
Painting & Decorating Contractors: **4.8%**
Other Contractors: **11.2%**
Institutional/Commercial/Industrial: **16.2%**
Other Dealers: **0%**

Estimated 1981 Average Gross Decorative Products Sales Per Store: **$183,375**
Average Display Area for Decorative Products Per Store: **1,900 square feet**
Decorative Products Dollar Volume (1981 Gross Sales) Per Square Foot: **$97**
Three Best Sales Months for Decorative Products: **September, June, May**
Three Worst Sales Months for Decorative Products: **February, March, December**
Three Best Sales Days of the Week for Decorative Products (on Average) During 1981: **Saturday, Friday, Monday**
Three Worst Sales Days of the Week for Decorative Products (on Average) During 1981: **Monday, Tuesday, Thursday**
Average Number of Employees Per Store: **7.5**
Respondents with an On-Staff Decorator: **50.8%**

Ranking of Departments by Average Gross Margin:
Floorcoverings: **45.9%**
Chemical Specialties: **45.8%**
Sundries: **40.0%**
Window Treatments: **39.5%**
Paints & Coatings: **34.6%**
Wallcoverings: **32.4%**

Paint Department Data:

Selling: **100%**
Average Number of Full Lines Carried: **1.4**
Average Number of Turns on Inventory: **4.8**
Average NONDISCOUNT Price Per Gallon—Interior, Flat Latex: **$12.75**
Average DISCOUNT Price Per Gallon—Interior, Flat Latex: **$8.94**
Gallons Sold at a Discount (Average for Those Which Do Some Discounting): **41.6%**

Wallcoverings Department Data:

Selling: **66.9%**
Of Those Selling, Doing So from Sample Books Only: **100%**
Average Number of Sample Books: **161.5**
Average NONDISCOUNT Price Per Single Roll: **$13.45**
Average DISCOUNT Price Per Single Roll: **$7.58**
Wallcoverings (in Units) Sold at a Discount (Average for Those Which Do Some Discounting): **31%**
Average Number of Rolls Purchased: **4.5**

Floorcoverings Department Data:

Selling: **67%**
Of Those Selling, Doing So from Stock: **100%**
Those Selling Offering an installation Service: **100%**
Average Floorcoverings Purchase: **$450**

Window Treatments Data

Selling: **72.3%**
Average Number of Years Selling: **7.5**
Average Window Treatments Purchase: **$173**
Of Those Selling Window Treatments, Percent Selling:
Drapes: **37.2%**
Blinds: **100%**
Shades: **49.6%**
Other: **39.2%**

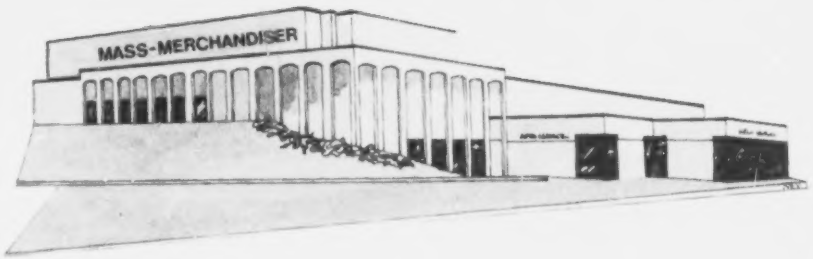
Equipment Rental Data:

Renting: **16.8%**
Rental Market by Customer Type:
DIY: **99.3%**
Contractors: **0.7%**
Other: **0**

dow treatments, floorcoverings and paint sundries topped the list.

While the $11.99 average non-discount price for a gallon of interior, flat latex paint was fairly high in comparison to other major outlet categories studied, the survey responses for mass merchandisers also indicated that a very high percentage of paint gallonage sold is going out the door at the $7.99 average discount price. Note, too, the very low prices charged for wallcoverings on average.

Mass merchandisers are the dominant force in the trade sales paints and coatings market—the guys everyone else selling in the diy market seems to be keeping an eye on. Indeed, Sears and Kmart topped just about everyone else's toughest competition list. ■



Mass Merchandisers Are The Guys Everyone Else Selling Trade Sales Paints Keeps An Eye On. Indeed, Sears And Kmart Topped Most 'Toughest Competition' Lists!

Profile: Mass Merchandisers

General Information:

Decorative Products Volume by Type of Product:
Paints & Coatings: **52.3%**
Sundries: **20.7%**
Chemical Specialties: **5.8%**
Wallcoverings: **3.3%**
Floorcoverings: **15.7%**
Window Treatments: **2.2%**
Decorative Products Volume by Type of Customer:
DIY: **84.7%**
Painting & Decorating Contractors: **1.2%**
Other Contractors: **3.3%**
Institutional/Commercial/Industrial: **10.4%**
Other Dealers: **0.4%**

Estimated 1981 Average Gross Decorative Products Sales Per Store: **$321,765**

Average Display Area for Decorative Products Per Store: **3,500 square feet**

Decorative Products Dollar Volume (1981 Gross Sales) Per Square Foot: **$92**

Three Best Sales Months for Decorative Products: **June, May, April**

Three Worst Sales Months for Decorative Products: **January, September, August**

Three Best Sales Days of the Week for Decorative Products (on Average) During 1981: **Saturday, Friday, Wednesday**
Three Worst Sales Days of the Week for Decorative Products (on Average) During 1981: **Monday, Wednesday, Tueday**

Average Number of Employees Per Department: **6.4%**
Respondents with an On-Staff Decorator: **8.3%**
Ranking of Departments by Average Gross Margin:
Window Treatments: **50%**
Floorcoverings: **42.5%**
Sundries: **34%**
Paints & Coatings **27.5%**
Chemical Specialties: **23.8%**
Wallcoverings: **20%**

Paint Department Data

Selling: **100%**
Average Number of Full Lines Carried: **1.6**
Average Number of Annual Turns on Inventory: **4.4**
Average NONDISCOUNT Price Per Gallon—Interior, Flat Latex: **$11.99**
Average DISCOUNT Price Per Gallon—Interior, Flat Latex: **$7.99**
Gallons Sold at a Discount (Average for Those Which Do Some Discounting): **85%**

Wallcoverings Department Data

Selling: **50%**
Of Those Selling, Doing So from Sample Books Only: **50%**
From Stock Only: **50%**
Average NONDISCOUNT Price Per Single Roll: **$8.00**
Average DISCOUNT Price Per Single Roll: **$3.50**
Wallcoverings (in Units) Sold at a Discount (Average for Those Which Do Some Discounting): **12.5%**
Average Number of Rolls Purchased: **6**

Floorcoverings Department Data:

Selling: **75%**
Of Those Selling, Doing So from Stock: **100%**
Those Selling Offering an Installation Service: **100%**
Average Floorcoverings Purchase: **$238**

Window Treatments Data:

Selling: **33%**
Average Number of Years Selling: **7**
Of Those Selling Window Treatments, Percent Selling:
Drapes: **100%**
Blinds: **100%**
Shades: **100%**
Other: — —

Equipment Rental Data:

Renting: **42%**
Rental Market by Customer Type:
DIY: **100%**

Floorcoverings Stores:

Impact In Wallcoverings & Window Treatments

Profile On Page 34

In tabulating survey responses, *DPW* tried to group stores with similar characteristics into the same classifications. Existing within the survey population was a number of responses from stores that were heavily into the floorcoverings business—some of which also had a fair wallcoverings and window treatments volume.

None of the floorcoverings stores in the *DPW* survey population sold paints, paint sundries or chemical specialties (although some floorcoverings stores do, see "Product Variations"). The floorcoverings stores in the survey population, however, were high-volume ($415,700 average per store) outlets for decorative products. They were characterized by heavy reliance on diy sales and sales to other (probably floorcoverings installation) contractors and institutional/commercial/industrial accounts. The average display area for these stores was a relatively high 2,900 square feet.

As one might expect, floorcoverings ranked as the highest margin department for these stores. All of them stocked floorcoverings and offered an installation service. Average inventory requirements, at $99,000 (estimated for 1982), were very high. Many of these stores rented floor care equipment, primarily to the diy market. ■

Interior Design Studios:

High-Volume In Big-Ticket Items

Profile On Pages 34-35

Among the responses in *DPW's* 1981-82 Reader Survey were a number (18) of completed questionnaires from people in charge of interior design (or decorating) studios. Last year, these types of responses were dumped unceremoniously (along with floorcoverings stores) into the catchall "Other" category. This year, *DPW* felt it had enough responses from interior design studios to list them as a separate category with their own profile.

Like the floorcoverings stores, the interior design studio respondents did not carry paints and coatings but had strong window treatments, floorcoverings and wallcoverings volumes. Primary market emphasis was generally on other (primarily building and remodeling) contractors, decorative products dealers, and institutional/commercial/industrial customers, but some had a good diy volume.

The interior design studios were characterized by the highest average prices charged for wallcoverings and the highest average number of single rolls bought (10.3). They also averaged the highest number of sample books carried, and were lowest in the percentage of wallcoverings sold at discount.

When these types of outlets sell, they tend to do so in big-ticket items and in high volumes. Note the $1,094 average floorcoverings purchase and the $879 average window treatments purchase. ■

Others:

A Mixed Bag, But Hard To Ignore

Profile On Page 35

Eighteen (18) responses received as part of the *DPW* survey could not be easily classified into one of the major outlet groupings. These included a few wholesalers with a fair diy trade, a couple of feed and grain stores selling paints and coatings, and even a drug store with a significant paint volume.

With such a diverse mixture, we're not sure how meaningful the profile of the category we dubbed "Other" is. The range of average decorative products volume for this group, for example, ranged from just under $1,000 to several hundred thousand dollars. No view of the decorative products market would be complete without including these types of outlets somewhere, however. It is important to recognize, too, that these responses were tabulated as part of the totals for the survey population as a whole. ■

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Priss Prints Inc.®

4290 Creek Rd., Cincinnati, Ohio 45241

Circle 18 on Reader Action Card

Profile: Floorcovering Stores

General Information:

Decorative Products Volume by Type of Product:
Paints & Coatings: **0**
Sundries: **0**
Chemical Specialties: **0**
Wallcoverings: **5.7%**
Floorcoverings: **82.1%**
Window Treatments: **8.3%**
Arts & Crafts: **0**
Other: **3.9%**

Decorative Products Volume by Type of Customer:
DIY: **54.9%**
Painting & Decorating Contractors: **5.7%**
Other Contractors: **25.3%**
Institutional/Commercial/Industrial: **14.1%**
Other Dealers: **0**

Estimated 1981 Average Gross Decorative Products Sales Per Store: **$415,700**
Average Display Area for Decorative Products Per Store: **2,900 square feet**
Decorative Products Dollar Volume (1981 Gross Sales) Per Square Foot: **$143**
Three Best Sales Months for Decorative Products: **August, September, May**
Three Worst Sales Months for Decorative Products: **February, October, November**
Three Best Sales Days of the Week for Decorative Products (on Average) During 1981: **Saturday, Monday, Friday**
Three Worst Sales Days of the Week for Decorative Products (on Average) During 1981: **Monday, Wednesday, Thursday**
Average Number of Employees Per Store: **6.2**
Respondents with an On-Staff Decorator: **50%**

Ranking of Departments by Average Gross Margin:
Floorcoverings: **42.6%**
Window Treatments: **39.8%**
Wallcoverings: **34%**

Paint Department Data

Selling: **0**

Wallcoverings Department Data:

Selling: **6.3%**
Of Those Selling, Doing So from Sample Books Only: **90.2%**
From Stock Only: **0**
From Both Sample Books and Stock: **9.8%**
Average NONDISCOUNT Price Per Single Roll: **$14.19**
Average DISCOUNT Price Per Single Roll: **$8.69**
Wallcoverings (in Units) Sold at a Discount (Average for Those Which Do Some Discounting): **27.9%**
Average Number of Rolls Purchased: **5.5**

Floorcoverings Department Data:

Selling: **100%**
Of Those Selling, Doing So from Stock: **100%**
Those Selling Offering an Installation Service: **100%**
Average Floorcoverings Purchase: **$556**

Window Treatments Data

Selling: **85.2%**
Average Number of Years Selling: **4.7**
Average Window Treatments Purchase: **$197**
Of Those Selling Window Treatments, Percent Selling:
Drapes: **50%**
Blinds: **80%**
Shades: **87.5%**
Other: **52.5%**

Equipment Rental Data:

Percent Renting: **74.5%**
Rental Market by Customer Type:
DIY: **96.7%**
Contractors: **3.0%**
Other: **0.3%**

Interior Design Studios Were Highest In Prices Charged For Wallcoverings And Average Number Of Rolls Bought And Lowest In The Percent Sold At A Discount

Profile: Interior Design Studios

General Information:

Decorative Products Volume by Type of Product:
Paints & Coatings: **0**
Sundries: **0**
Chemical Specialties: **0**
Wallcoverings: **17.8%**
Floorcoverings: **23.8%**
Window Treatments: **40.4%**
Arts & Crafts: **3.5%**
Other: **14.5%**

Decorative Products Volume by Type of Customer:
DIY: **20.4%**
Painting & Decorating Contractors: **8%**
Other Contractors: **40.9%**
Institutional/Commercial/Industrial: **12.7%**
Other Dealers: **18%**

Estimated 1981 Average Gross Decorative Products Sales Per Showroom: **$230,000**

Average Display Area for Decorative Products Per Showroom: **2,700 square feet**

Decorative Products Dollar Volume (1981 Gross Sales) Per Square Foot: **$85**

Best Sales Months for Decorative Products: **September, May, April**

Worst Sales Months for Decorative Products: **July, August**
Three Best Sales Days of the Week for Decorative Products (on Average) During 1981: **Thursday, Saturday, Monday**
Three Worst Sales Days of the Week for Decorative Products (on Average) During 1981: **Monday, Friday, Tuesday**
Average Number of Employees Per Location: **8.6**
Respondents with an On-Staff Decorator: **81.3%**

Ranking of Departments by Gross Average Margin:
Window Treatments: **48.%**
Wallcoverings: **34.4%**
Floorcoverings: **32.3%**

Paint Department Data:

Selling: **0**

Wallcoverings Department Data:

Selling: **100%**
Of Those Selling, Doing So from Sample Books Only: **100%**
Average Number of Sample Books: **272**
Average NONDISCOUNT Price Per Single Roll: **$18.36**
Average DISCOUNT Price Per Single Roll: **$14.38**
Wallcoverings (in Units) Sold at a Discount (Average for Those Which Do Some Discounting): **26%**
Average Number of Rolls Purchased: **10.3**

Floorcoverings Department Data:

Selling: **83.9%**
Of Those Selling, Doing So from Stock: **0**
Those Selling Offering an Installation Service: **100%**
Average Floorcoverings Purchase: **$1,094**

Window Treatments Data:

Selling: **100%**
Average Number of Years Selling: **13.3**
Average Window Treatments Purchase: **$879**
Of Those Selling Window Treatments, Percent Selling:
Drapes: **100%**
Blinds: **100%**
Shades: **100%**
Other: **100%**

Profile: "Other"

General Information:

Decorative Products Volume by Type of Product:
Paints & Coatings: **52.2%**
Sundries: **25.5%**
Chemical Specialties: **7.7%**
Wallcoverings: **4.2%**
Floorcoverings: **2.7%**
Window Treatments: **3.8%**
Arts & Crafts: **0.4%**
Other: **3.5%**
Decorative Products Volume by Type of Customer:
DIY: **35.6%**
Painting & Decorating Contractors: **13%**
Other Contractors: **13.7%**
Institutional/Commercial/Industrial: **13.8%**
Other Dealers: **23.9%**

Estimated 1981 Average Gross Decorative Products Sales Per Store: **$122,000**

Average Display Area for Decorative Products Per Store: **1,000**

Decorative Products Dollar Volume (1981 Gross Sales) Per Square Foot: **$122**

Summary

Type of Store	Paints & Coatings	Sundries	Chemical Spec.	Wallcoverings	Floorcoverings	Window Treatments	Arts & Crafts	Other	Average Gross Decorative Products Sales
Independents	56.3%	16.1%	3.7%	19.3%	2.5%	1.4%*	0.5%	0.2%	$317,000
Manufacturer Owned	65.3%	15.6%*	4.0%	9.3%	2.9%	2.5%*	0.3%	0.1%	$601,500
Hardware	44.6%	23.4%*	21.3%	3.8%	1.5%	4.5%	0.6%	0.3%	$ 43,750
Lumber/Building	66.3%*	15.1%	10.3%	3.9%	3.5%	0.9%	0	0	$149,000
Home Center	45.2%	15.2%	12.1%	10.1%	6.3%*	5.7%	2.1%	3.3%	$183,375
Mass Merchandiser	52.3%	20.7%	5.8%	3.3%	15.7%	2.2%	0	0	$321,765
Floorcoverings	0	0	0	5.7%	82.1%*	8.3%	0	3.9%	$415,700
Interior Design	0	0	0	17.8%	23.8%	40.4%*	3.5%	14.5%	$230,000
"Other"	52.5%*	25.5%	7.7%	4.2%	2.7%	3.8%*	0.4%	3.5%	$122,000
Average For Survey	42.5%	14.6%	7.2%	8.6%	15.6%	7.7%	0.8%	3.0%	100%

The table above summarizes some of the data from the previous pages in regard to average dollar volume by type of product. Asterisks indicate those departments ranked as having the highest gross margins.

Product Variations: *Strengths & Weaknesses In Each Store's Mix*

We asked survey respondents to indicate whether their stores sold over 100 different types of selected decorative products. The numbers in the table below indicate the percentages of respondents for each of the major store categories which said they carried the decorative products shown at left. The averages for the survey population are shown in the column at far right. One way to use this table is to go through it and circle the the numbers above a certain preestablished level—say, 60 percent. What should emerge is a fairly clear picture of the decorative product strengths of each of the competing types of sales outlets. Conversely, low percentages may indicate weakness or "holes" in the decorative product mix of the nine different types of outlets. The averages for the survey population may be used as an indicator of greatest or lowest product overlap or competition. Because the responses in this part of the survey were on a different part of the survey form, there may not be exact agreement between the percentages shown below and product data on the previous pages. Note, for example, that although none of the floorcoverings stores respondents indicated they carried paints and coatings earlier, there are generally low percentages shown for floorcoverings store respondents adjacent to various categories of paints and coatings shown at left.

Although none of the floorcoverings respondents checked "yes" when asked simply whether their stores sold paints and coatings, a few did respond in the affirmative when they saw that product category subdivided as it is at left. The highest percentages were, as one would expect, for masonry and wood floor sealers and for dampproofing masonry compounds.

Types of Stores	Independents (I)	Manufacturer (M)	Hardware (H)	Lumber (L)	Home Center (HC)	Mass Mer. (MM)	Floorcoverings (F)	Interior Design (ID)	Other (O)	Average (A)
ART & CRAFT MATERIALS										
1. Artists brushes	35	15	57	34	34	17	0	0	40	26
2. Acrylic paints	22	9	25	26	21	17	0	0	20	16
3. Craft kits	6	0	8	0	7	0	0	7	7	4
4. Drawing inks	14	0	4	0	7	17	0	0	0	5
5. Easels and drawing tables	15	0	3	0	3	17	0	0	0	4
6. Modeling clays/plaster	9	0	12	12	3	0	0	0	7	5
7. Oil colors	17	6	12	10	21	33	0	0	7	11
8. Oil painting canvas	16	3	3	0	10	17	0	0	0	5
9. Palettes	14	3	2	0	3	17	0	0	0	4
10. Sketching paper/pads	16	0	5	0	10	17	0	0	7	6
11. Water color materials	14	3	3	0	14	17	0	0	7	6
CHEMICAL SPECIALTIES										
12. Glues and adhesives	76	68	98	98	86	50	76	0	73	71
13. Caulking/sealant, butyl rubber	84	94	99	98	79	67	29	0	60	68
14. Caulking/sealant, latex	90	100	98	98	90	50	41	0	53	74
15. Caulking/sealant, oil-based	71	85	98	86	69	33	24	0	40	56
16. Caulking/sealant, silicone	78	85	98	92	72	67	29	0	60	65
17. Chemical paint removers	87	100	100	90	76	67	18	0	60	76
18. Etching and cleaning compounds for masonry	55	68	76	74	48	33	18	0	47	47

STORE TYPES	I	M	H	L	HC	MM	F	ID	O	A
19. Mildew removers	76	88	89	54	59	33	29	7	33	52
20. Mildew control additives	57	79	63	48	31	17	18	0	13	36
21. Rust converters	44	59	70	48	45	50	6	0	33	39
22. Solvents and thinners (packaged)	86	100	80	92	83	17	35	0	60	61
23. Wallpaper release coatings	74	62	75	34	55	33	18	0	13	40
24. Wall patching kits	64	65	80	56	66	50	18	0	27	47
25. Waxes and polishes	60	24	92	50	76	50	65	7	27	50
26. Wood preservatives	75	91	98	84	86	27	24	0	40	61
COATINGS & PAINT PRODUCTS										
27. Antiquing finishes	62	29	63	40	55	67	6	0	20	38
28. Damproofing masonry compounds	60	59	70	78	66	17	18	0	27	44
29. Driveway coatings	32	71	74	62	55	33	0	0	40	41
30. Enamels, aerosol packaged	81	100	74	78	76	100	6	0	53	63
31. Fire-retardant (intumescent) coatings	35	50	25	26	31	33	0	0	0	22
32. Fire-retardant wood finishes	21	44	3	12	17	33	0	0	7	15
33. Floor sealers (masonry)	65	100	75	82	72	50	18	0	53	57
34. Floor sealers (wood)	77	82	83	78	72	67	18	7	47	51
35. Flooring system (seamless)	11	15	6	10	24	33	12	0	7	13
36. Professional painter coatings	70	96	24	30	41	50	0	0	33	38
37. Roof coatings	54	71	95	100	59	33	0	0	53	52
38. Stains, exterior transparent or semi-transparent	84	100	91	96	83	67	12	0	33	63
39. Stains, exterior solid color or pigmented	83	97	83	92	79	50	6	0	40	59
40. Vapor barrier paints (water-base)	42	59	42	46	34	50	0	0	33	34
HOME DECORATIVE MERCHANDISE										
41. Bathroom seats	4	3	91	54	69	50	12	7	27	35
42. Carpeting	25	24	0	32	69	17	94	86	13	40
43. Ceiling beams	1	0	0	46	28	0	0	0	0	8
44. Ceiling tile	4	3	13	86	31	17	6	14	0	19
45. Corner guards	46	41	23	48	45	17	24	14	7	42
46. Decorative tile	12	59	3	46	45	33	59	64	7	36
47. Draperies	28	3	8	2	34	0	29	93	7	22
48. Drapery hardware	26	6	67	6	48	33	29	93	20	37
49. Fabrics (matching wallcoverings)	52	35	5	6	45	0	76	100	13	37
50. Floorcoverings (roll goods, hard surface)	24	21	1	38	66	50	100	64	13	42
51. Floor tile (squares)	20	18	8	38	59	33	82	57	20	37

STORE TYPES	I	M	H	L	HC	MM	F	ID	O	A
Home Decorative (Continued)										
52. Mirrors	14	3	28	40	55	67	0	57	20	35
53. Mosaic tile	6	0	6	14	34	17	41	50	7	19
54. Mouldings	10	6	32	78	52	50	29	21	0	31
55. Picture frames	24	3	36	48	34	33	0	7	13	22
56. Picture hanging hardware	26	6	62	64	55	33	0	0	13	29
57. Pictures for framing	8	0	18	6	21	0	0	0	0	6
58. Self-adhesive decorative plastic (Con-Tact brand type)	16	6	65	20	34	17	0	0	13	19
59. Shelf edging (decorative)	1	0	17	16	24	0	0	0	7	7
60. Shutters	15	3	5	76	59	17	6	79	13	30
61. Unfinished furniture	4	6	4	14	10	0	0	7	0	4
62. Venetian blinds	24	12	11	4	34	100	53	100	13	26
63. Wall tile	9	6	4	26	52	33	41	57	7	24
64. Window shades	37	18	45	6	52	17	41	100	20	37
65. Wood finishing kits	29	12	41	36	52	33	6	0	7	24
TOOLS, EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES										
66. Breather vents	32	32	40	58	34	0	0	0	33	26
67. Carpet laying tools	10	3	35	10	28	33	41	0	7	19
68. Caulking guns	83	91	83	94	83	67	24	0	60	65
69. Cleaning equipment, pressure	18	44	51	12	21	0	6	0	13	17
70. Floor maintenance equipment	20	6	35	14	31	33	6	0	13	16
71. Graining tools	36	21	18	8	21	0	0	0	7	12
72. Heat guns	13	6	28	6	14	17	6	0	7	10
73. Knives (linolem)	49	62	99	78	83	50	53	0	20	53
74. Ladders	52	85	100	86	62	33	0	0	40	51
75. Linoleum laying tools	16	9	56	32	69	50	53	0	7	32
76. Masking tape	90	100	100	94	83	100	18	0	53	71
77. Mixing attachments for paint pails/drums	45	59	67	48	52	0	0	0	27	33
78. Pad painting tools	76	97	93	84	69	33	12	0	33	55
79. Paint pails, metal	69	97	84	62	76	83	0	0	33	56
80. Paint pails, paper	58	82	73	40	59	33	0	0	20	41
81. Paint pails, plastic	76	100	73	88	69	67	6	0	40	58
82. Paint pail, liners	34	59	40	32	45	17	0	0	7	30
83. Paperhanging kits	82	79	67	40	69	33	59	0	27	51
84. Respirators	47	85	84	46	45	0	0	0	47	39
85. Rollers and roller covers (paint)	85	97	95	84	86	67	12	0	53	64

Continued on page 39

STORE TYPES	I	M	H	L	HC	MM	F	ID	O	A
Tools & Equipment Continued										
86. Shampooing machines	30	82	31	36	31	33	0	0	20	29
87. Spray outfit (complete airless unit)	24	82	31	20	24	17	0	0	7	23
89. Spray outfit (complete conventional unit)	14	50	18	8	20	17	0	0	13	16
90. Spray accessories (guns, tips, nozzles, etc.)	26	79	34	14	20	17	0	0	13	23
91. Wallpaper pasting machines	1	6	0	0	6	0	0	0	1	1
92. Wallpaper removers (Mechanical)	26	21	12	4	24	0	0	0	10	
WALLCOVERINGS & WALLPAPERS										
93. Adhesives and pastes for wallcoverings	91	91	89	60	76	50	76	36	33	67
94. Lining paper	68	65	10	14	59	33	65	64	7	43
95. Murals (photographic)	73	62	13	18	55	17	76	79	13	45
96. Scenics	67	62	11	14	45	17	59	93	7	42
97. Wall fabrics	58	56	16	14	48	17	76	86	7	42
Wallcoverings										
98. Flocked	70	59	15	14	52	33	71	86	33	48
99. Prepasted	80	65	27	20	66	33	94	186	40	58
100. Strippable	79	21	27	12	62	17	94	86	33	49
101. Squares	15	56	25	4	21	0	24	36	0	20
102. Wallcovering removers (chemical)	71	78	48	14	48	17	12	14	0	34
MISCELLANEOUS PRODUCTS										
103. Ceiling fans (decorative)	4	0	45	38	52	17	12	21	13	22
104. Glass for windows	18	3	88	66	31	0	0	0	7	24
105. Gold leaf/silver leaf materials	17	9	19	6	17	0	0	0	0	8
106. Lamps and overhead lights	6	3	52	38	45	33	0	50	13	27
107. Window glazing plastics	22	12	94	64	34	0	6	0	13	27

Products Variations

Equipment Rentals: Profits In Floor Care Products

This was the first time *DPW* had asked anything about the rental market in its Annual Reader Survey and the results showed that for most types of outlets, floor maintenance equipment—carpet cleaners and floor buffers—was the type of equipment most likely to be rented.

The paint-manufacturer-owned stores were most heavily into renting paint spray equipment—airless and conventional—pressure washers and other equipment likely to be used by painting contractors. Hardware stores, lumber/building stores and home centers were more heavily into rental of lawn and garden equipment—tillers, seed spreaders and so on. Here's a partial list of the types of equipment rented by survey respondents:

But Many Retailers Are Also Renting Everything From Paint Spray Equipment To Mechanical Wallpaper Removers And Lawn & Garden Equipment

- Staple guns
- Carpet cleaning equipment
- Wallpaper removers (steam)
- Air and airless paint sprayers
- Floor sanders and scrubbers
- Floor buffers
- Chain saws
- Ladders
- Garden tools
- Drywall tools
- Power washers
- Wallpaper paste tables

The equipment rental market will be the subject of an in-depth

report in the April 1982 issue of *DPW*. Among other highlights of this year's Reader Survey so far not reported:

- Independent paint and wallpaper stores listed, as one would expect, paints and wallcoverings as being among the products most promoted in paid advertising during 1982, but there was also a fairly high incidence of independents who listed window treatments as being among the most heavily promoted products. Window treatments were also high among the types of products independents said they would be considering adding in 1982. Draperies and blinds were the window treatments they said they'd most likely add. Arts and craft materials were the products independents claimed they would most likely be dropping. Indeed, *DPW* has noted a continued decline in independents who stock arts and crafts materials in recent Reader Surveys. A number of independents also said they'd be getting out of the floorcoverings business, particularly sales of linoleum.
- Decorative products other types of outlets said they'd be considering as additions to their product mix in 1982 included: unfinished furniture, custom framing, floorcoverings, drywall materials, bath accessories, roof mastics, kitchen cabinets, decorative fireplaces, paneling, discontinued wallcoverings, decorative mirrors, weatherstripping, economy paint lines, window glass, shutters, fire extinguishers and safety equipment such as respirators and safety goggles.
- In the product data for the window treatments departments of each type of outlet, a category called "other" is included. Some readers may be wondering what other types of window treatments there are besides drapes, blinds and shades. Among the products included by survey respondents in the "other" category were: woven woods, vertical blinds, mini-blinds and shutters.

Questions concerning the *DPW* Reader Survey should be addressed to: *Decorative Products World*, 2911 Washington Ave. St. Louis, Mo. 63103

Color Marketing Group Issues 1983 Forecast

Colors To Reflect Investment Attitudes of The Public

Color Marketing Group (CMG) has issued its *Color Directions-1983* palette, which represents its overall color trend analysis for key industries. *Color Directions-1983* includes a two-year look ahead at "forecast" and "ascending" colors for home furnishings. The "Living Home" palette was developed by CMG members from the carpet, wallcovering, furniture, fabric, domestic, drapery and related industries.

According to CMG, the 1983 Forecast colors for home furnishings reflect the investment attitude of the buying public with a palette that extends what is available now. There are no startling changes. There is, however, a real freshness in tonal and accent shifts. This freshness will contribute selling appeal with a continuity comforting to the consumer.

The 1983 colors are very sophisticated and include both dramatic accents and subtly colored neutrals. They are, for the most part, warm and tempered with gray. Red influences many of the hues, but a good number show yellow in their undertones, a trend that comes from the apparel field.

Ten key colors listed in CMG's 1983 *Color Directions* as "forecast" cover the principal color families, light and dark tones and the neutral areas. Strawberry Pink, French Blue and Apricot Chiffon are three that could be called either mid-tone pastels or labeled as part of the "colored" neutrals. Their important qualities lie in the underlying feel of red and their soft and dusty grayed look, CMG states. Arpicot Chiffon marks the return of gold to the palette, now in a mellower form. French Blue, with its purple cast, works well with the "ascending" mauves.

Along with the lighter Strawberry Pink, Dusty Rose and Madder cover the red area. Dusty Rose is mid-toned and grayed and Madder takes red to a deep range and is purple cast. Madder works with a number of neutrals and is a good, basic and usable color.

The CMG sees neutrals for 1983 as being sophisticated and even complicated. Though heavily grayed, these are the "colored" neutrals; they might be called transition colors as they show the flow of the overall palette. Greige, an extension of beige, hugs the red side of the spectrum making it a good foil for colors like Dusty Rose and Madder. Putty, a neutral yellowed green, reinforces the green directions. This is a color that shows the influence of fashion and the popularity of camouflage colors. In home furnishings it makes a good background color. Smokescreen gives a gray neutral in the blue-green area. Emerald, a deep green leaning to yellow, is the other deep in the "forecast" category.

The "ascending" colors listed in *Color Directions-1983* for home furnishings are those that are with us now but will increase in importance over the next two years. The strength of yellow becomes very evident in colors shown from the green family. A key group comes from the apparel field—the camouflage colors: Absinthe, Evergreen, Spinach and Tarragon. Another home furnishings color is Greenapple, a saturated midtone, again with a yellow feel. Nile is the light green, and the neutral yellow greens are the very gray: Willow, Asper Seagull and Silver Surf. The one blue cast green is Spruce.

The yellows themselves form an important category with the colored neutrals, Custard and Butternut, as a base. The true yellows, Banana, Indian Corn and Corn Tassel provide the core, with Mimosa, a bright pastel, seen as an accent. Curry and Mustard could be said to represent the metallics we have seen in apparel. CMG names some true metallics in the "ascending" group—Gilt, Tinfoil and an opalescent taupe, Pewter.

(Continued on page 52)